

# SHIP AND BARGE at a glance

Water transport is environmentally responsible, fuel efficient and has the ability to carry massive amounts of goods of just about any size or weight.



## PROS

- High carrying capacity with few size and weight restrictions
- Often one of the cheapest shipping modes
- Inclement weather less likely to impact shipments
- Environmentally responsible and fuel efficient
- Extensive coverage in the U.S. and around the world



## CONS

- Slow transit time
- Can be difficult to track shipment's location while in transit
- Requires access to navigable waterways
- Aging infrastructure



## COST

What's the biggest advantage of shipping over the water? Most would say cost. There are massive economies of scale at play that enable ships and barges to have the lowest cost per-ton-mile of any transportation mode. However, keep an eye out for warehousing fees at seaports, which can be expensive if your freight needs to sit in storage for a while, especially if it all arrives at the same time!



## SPEED

Quick delivery? Not with this shipping mode. Ships and barges typically travel at 5-11 miles per hour via inland routes and 20 miles per hour on the ocean. Depending on the distance your goods are traveling, most shipments can take up to a month to arrive at their destination. As long as you have the ability to plan ahead or can use existing inventory as a buffer, this mode could be a good option for you.



## CAPACITY

Water transport is ideal for transporting heavy, bulk freight. While weight can be an issue for other modes, it typically is not a problem for water freight. Because of the sheer size or volume of some products being shipped – including grain, minerals, metals, ores, steel coils and heavy machinery – ship or barge often makes the most sense.



## REACH

Water transport is only a viable option if your shipping origin and destination are located on a navigable waterway. Upon reaching land, you may need to arrange transportation via truck or rail to get your product to its final destination.



## SHIPMENT VISIBILITY

One of the major disadvantages of water transport is not being able to track the exact location of your shipments. While technology is improving, depending on your carrier, tracking the exact location of your shipments on the water can be more challenging than other modes.



## RELIABILITY

Another downside of shipping by barge or ship is that it can be difficult to predict and control the transit times. Congestion along the route or at ports or unplanned outages caused by an aging infrastructure of inland waterways can end up causing delays. Weather related issues can also seriously impact transit times. Although, if you are not in a rush, transit time may not be a major concern.



## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Marine transport is considered one of the most environmentally responsible shipping modes, especially when you compare total volume of emissions across all types of freight transportation. Plus, there have been significant technological improvements in engine efficiency, hull design and carrying capacity – all leading to a reduction in emissions and an increase in fuel efficiency.